

CLAIMS

1. A method of managing incoming messages on a communications network having multiple user recipients, comprising the steps of:

5 providing a filtering component that monitors incoming messages sent to an addressee that is one of the user recipients;

identifying whether or not the incoming message is an authorized message that originates from an approved subscription source for the addressee of the incoming message;

10 forwarding any such authorized message to the addressee; and

blocking delivery of any incoming message that is not identified as an authorized message.

2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:

15 maintaining a database that has a listing of approved subscription sources for the addressee.

3. The method of Claim 2, wherein said identifying step comprises:

20 matching the incoming message with the listing of approved subscription sources of the addressee.

4. The method of Claim 3, wherein said identifying step comprises:

25 making a determination whether the incoming message contains operational information from an approved subscription source of the addressee and, if so, then forwarding the incoming message to the addressee.

5. The method of Claim 3, wherein said identifying step comprises:

making a determination whether the incoming message contains operational information from a new subscription source that may require approval by the addressee and, if so, then forwarding the incoming message to the addressee.

5

6. The method of Claim 3, wherein said database comprises one or more predetermined parameters for each approved subscription sources on the listing, and said identifying includes matching attributes of the incoming message with said predetermined parameters in said database.

10

7. The method of Claim 6, wherein said parameters comprise any of the following:

origination address, alias origination address, proxy destination address, message subject, ID code name, and unique identifier field.

15

8. The method of Claim 1, which comprising a message service provider for the multiple user recipients, wherein one or more of the subscription sources is a commercial partner of the message service provider.

20

9. The method of Claim 1, comprising a message service provider for the multiple user recipients, wherein the filtering component monitors incoming messages of any of the following types:

email, instant messaging, telephonic, radio, television, wireless, text, audio, visual, and combinations thereof.

25

10. The method of Claim 1, wherein said filtering component monitors outgoing messages from user recipients sent to a subscription source to identify operational information relating to starting a new subscription arrangement, modification, or cancellation of an existing subscription arrangement.

5

11. The method of Claim 1, wherein said forwarding step comprises:
marking the authorized message to notify the addressee that the authorized message comes from an approved subscription source.

10 12. The method of Claim 2, further comprising the step of:
providing multiple user recipients with a data form structure for starting, modifying, or canceling a subscription arrangement, said data form structure having fields of information for parameters stored in said database.

15 13. A method of assisting multiple users of a communications service provider to monitor new, ongoing, and cancelled subscription-type relationships that provide a recurring series of messages sent to one or more of such multiple users, comprising the steps of:

creating a database that comprises a listing of approved message sources for
20 individual users, the database having one or more parameters to uniquely identify each approved message source;

monitoring incoming messages sent to a destination address of an individual user, said incoming messages having one or more attributes associated therewith;

comparing the attributes of an incoming message with the parameters of the
25 database to determine whether the incoming message is an authorized message from an approved message source on the listing in the database; and

forwarding only such authorized messages to the individual user.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein said parameters comprise any of the following:

5 origination address, alias origination address, proxy destination address, message subject, ID code name, and unique identifier field.

15. The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of:

making portions of the database available for read access by the individual
10 user.

16. The method of Claim 13, wherein the communications service provider enables capability for said monitoring, comparing, and forwarding of any of the following types of incoming messages:

15 email, instant messaging, telephonic, radio, television, satellite, wireless, text, audio, visual, and combinations thereof.

17. The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of:

monitoring outgoing messages from individual users to identify operations
20 information relating to starting a new subscription arrangement, or modifying, or canceling an existing subscription arrangement.

18. The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of:

providing the multiple users with a data form structure for starting, modifying,
25 or canceling a subscription arrangement, said data form structure having fields of information for parameters stored in the database.

19. The method of Claim 13, wherein said forwarding step comprises:

marking the authorized message to notify the addressee that the authorized message comes from an approved message source.

5

20. The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of:

providing hyper-links on a display screen of an individual user for access to any of the following:

approved subscription database, subscription start form, and subscription

10 cancel form.

21. An apparatus for managing incoming messages on a communications network having multiple user recipients, comprising:

a filtering component for monitoring incoming messages sent to an addressee

15 that is one of the user recipients;

means for identifying whether or not the incoming message is an authorized message that originates from an approved subscription source for the addressee of the incoming message;

means for forwarding any such authorized message to the addressee; and

20 means for blocking delivery of any incoming message that is not identified as an authorized message.

22. The apparatus of Claim 21, further comprising:

a database that has a listing of approved subscription sources for the

25 addressee.

23. The apparatus of Claim 22, wherein said means for identifying comprise:
means for matching the incoming message with the listing of approved
subscription sources of the addressee.

5 24. The apparatus of Claim 23, said means for identifying comprising:
means for making a determination whether the incoming message contains
operational information from an approved subscription source of the addressee and,
if so, then forwarding the incoming message to the addressee.

10 25. The apparatus of Claim 23, said means for identifying comprising:
means for making a determination whether the incoming message contains
operational information from a new subscription source that may require approval by
the addressee and, if so, then forwarding the incoming message to the addressee.

15 26. The apparatus of Claim 23, said database comprising one or more
predetermined parameters for each approved subscription sources on the listing,
and said means for identifying comprising means for matching attributes of the
incoming message with said predetermined parameters in said database.

20 27. The apparatus of Claim 26, wherein said parameters comprise any of the
following:

origination address, alias origination address, proxy destination address,
message subject, ID code name, and unique identifier field.

28. The apparatus of Claim 21, said network comprising a message service provider for the multiple user recipients wherein one or more of the subscription sources is a commercial partner of the message service provider.

5 29. The apparatus of Claim 21, said network comprises a message service provider for the multiple user recipients, wherein said filtering component monitors incoming messages of any of the following types:

email, instant messaging, telephonic, radio, television, wireless, text, audio, visual, and combinations thereof.

10

30. The apparatus of Claim 21, said filtering component monitoring outgoing messages from user recipients sent to a subscription source to identify operational information relating to starting a new subscription arrangement, modification, or cancellation of an existing subscription arrangement.

15

31. The apparatus of Claim 21, said means for forwarding comprising:

means for marking the authorized message to notify the addressee that the authorized message comes from an approved subscription source.

20 32. The apparatus of Claim 22, further comprising:

means for providing multiple user recipients with a data form structure for starting, modifying, or canceling a subscription arrangement, said data form structure having fields of information for parameters stored in said database.

25 33. The apparatus of Claim 22, further comprising:

means for monitoring outgoing messages from individual users to identify operations information relating to starting a new subscription arrangement, or modifying, or canceling an existing subscription arrangement.